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CALIFORNIA OLIVE OIL COUNCIL HOSTS ANNUAL MEETING

AMID OPTIMISM FOR NEXT SEVERAL YEARS, ORGANIZATION ELECTS BOARD, ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF ANNUAL OLIVE OIL COMPETITION AND PRESENTS PIONEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

May 2, 2018, Monterey, Calif.— The California Olive Oil Council (COOC) held its annual meeting and trade show on April 27 - 28 in Monterey with over 190 growers, producers, and service providers in attendance. The meeting included business, research, and legislative updates, sensory sessions, and grower workshops, highlighting a forecast of 20,000 additional acres to be planted by the end of 2020 on the current 40,000 acres noting the dramatic increase in demand for California Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

Simultaneously, the trade show showcased 27 trade service providers and sponsors, from those selling bulk olive oil to packaging and glass manufacturers to equipment suppliers. The group roundly applauded the COOC's report on past year's achievements including the record number of oils certified oils—almost 500 submissions.

Adding to the festive nature of the meeting, the results of the COOC Annual Olive Oil Competition were announced. The competition drew 174 submissions. COOC judges from the organization's certification tasting panel, awarded Best in Show—large production to Pacific Sun for its Proprietor's Blend and in the medium production category to Capay Gold for its single varietal Hojiblanca. Best in Show—small production recognized Jack Rabbit Olive Oil for its single varietal Frantoio. Millers Pablo Voitzyk of Pacific Sun and Emilio de la Cruz of Chacewater were recognized in the large and small categories respectively.

This year, competition scoring went paperless thanks to innovative software developed by Cropster. The software added a higher level of efficiency and judges were very pleased with the shift towards technology.

Each entry is scored in several areas, totaling a possible 100 points. A silver winner must score at least 76, a gold 86. All high scoring golds are then tasted in a second round with the highest score named Best in Show.

“The results demonstrate the high quality of California extra virgin olive oil,” said COOC President Karen Bond. She added that the winners also reflect the range of producers we now have in California, from boutique to artisan to commercial growers and millers.

COOC Executive Director Patricia Darragh noted that as the California wine industry has done, olive growers throughout the state, are discovering which olives grow best in the state's varying climates and geography. "With over 100 varieties now grown here, we are seeing new proprietary blending combinations unique to California as well as classic single varieties," she said. "Our high quality and certified extra virgin olive oils now offer a great range to both home cooks and restaurant kitchens around the country."

A reception and awards dinner capped the meetings with Roberta Klugman, a noted and tireless advocate for California olive oil, receiving the Pioneer Award. For a full list of COOC's annual olive oil competition and more information about the COOC, visit cooc.com.

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About the California Olive Oil Council and its Seal Certification

Founded in 1992, the California Olive Oil Council (COOC) is a non-profit trade and marketing association whose purpose is to promote the growing of olives and the production of fresh, high-quality extra virgin olive oil in California. The COOC represents more than 90% of olive oil production in the state with a membership of 400 growers, producers, and supporting members from the retail and service industries. The organization supports certified olive oil standards and provides grower, producer and consumer education. Through its Seal Certification program, the COOC helps everyone from home chefs to restaurants find guaranteed extra virgin olive oils for their kitchens. For more information, visit cooc.com.